

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE

bulletin

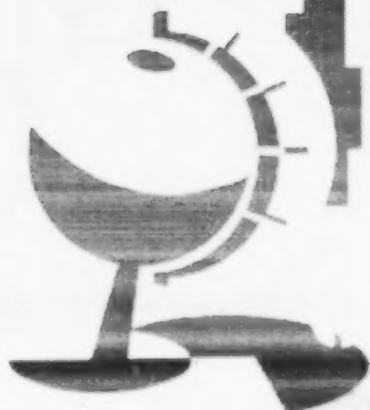
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January/February 2004

abc

Education Week
March 7-13, 2004

Learning... A Class Act
Apprendre... Une Affaire
De Classe



Drawing the Line on "Concerned Children's Advertisers"

by LESLEY-ANN BROWNE



I was sitting in a room of communications professionals. Like-minded individuals from across Canada who, for the most part, agree that using students in the fight for quality education is essentially wrong. We were there to hear a panel discussion on marketing in our schools. It amazed me when the presentation that was supposed to be a panel discussion on marketing to students turned into an exploitation of the audience and the promotion of what two companies have done in schools to sell their products. Where was the panel discussion? Where were the opposing views that argue against blatant marketing to students?

The presenters billed themselves as "concerned children's advertisers". Good to know I thought. It is great to know that they do care. But I took issue when the second part of the presentation allowed one of the advertisers to highlight a project that was recently set up in schools. They were a reputable national company. I use them myself and just recently purchased one of their products. The presenter, by his own admission, was "honest" in his comments. He gave lots of free stuff to the schools and targeted inner city schools where the kids were "needier" and "more appreciative."

As the presentation went on, I kept asking myself what was in it for the company. After all, I had at one time been in the same situation. I had worked for a national fast food chain and was permitted, and often invited, into schools to promote the company and their commitment to the environment. At the time I had questioned the validity of what I was doing as the environment had little to do with the sale of fast food. But the bottom line was profit. The kids I presented to were future buyers and were being educated to be

environmentally friendly. Should I have been permitted into the schools? Today I think not, but at the time I was doing my job.

The presenters were quite open as to what the company hoped to gain. Market studies showed that they had not tapped into the early teen female market and by giving out free product they were hoping to create a need. The presentation showed pictures of school kids and had quotes from students thanking them for the great products. The presenter stated that it was "heartwarming" to do the program in the schools and he was enthusiastic about what he did. He oozed sincerity and warmth about the project, and felt that the company should be commended for doing such great work in our schools. Towing the company line was an understatement.

So where do we draw the line? Should all companies and corporations be permitted to give out free products in our schools? The question has to be asked about how "free" the products actually are. This type of activity allows exclusive targeting of the student market and delivers an audience of students to corporations.

I understand that we have shortages in our schools and that the schools are often grateful to receive any type of resources. But I don't believe that the responsibility lies with in our schools. Our underfunded education system causes us to look elsewhere for funding. It is my opinion that this is wrong. The presenters did not permit time at the end to ask questions. It was almost as if they knew there would be criticisms and concerns. It is difficult to know why they even bothered to make the presentation other than to justify their cause.

bulletin

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**Education
Week 2004
March 7-13**

LOOKING FOR STORIES

WHEN WE TAKE THE TIME TO REFLECT on our past, how many of us go back to a time when we had teachers? For some of us, that may have been recently. For others, it may have been some time ago.

And when we do reflect, why is it that we go to the best teacher(s)? What was it about that man or woman that made a difference - not only to the present but to the future? And why, when special occasions come to our lives, does that special person share that moment?

Personally, I am able to list not one, but three special people who made a difference to my life - three teachers. To one I give

credit for becoming a teacher. To another I give credit for giving me the gift of and love for reading. And to the third I give credit for helping me to understand literature and introducing me to the desire to want to read; to want to explore the written word and, for that reason, I went on to do my degree in English.

Do you have a favourite teacher(s)? Would you like to share your story? If the answer is yes, I would like to read it. You can send it to this address: 15 Charlottetown Place, St. John's, NL, A1A 2P5, or e-mail me at edwardwade@nfsympatico.ca.

Ed Wade
St. John's

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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

Parenting program for students fosters development of empathy

Roots of Empathy is a parenting program for school children which fosters the development of empathy, a key ingredient in reducing bullying, aggression and violence in schools and in communities. Students learn emotional literacy, human development, infant safety issues and how to identify with another person's feelings, through an innovative school-based program. Ten times a year a newborn child comes into the school with his or her parents to share with students the milestones and challenges of raising a baby.

Staff at Lourdes Elementary in the Cormack Trail School Board have been implementing the *Roots of Empathy* program for three years. It originated with one class of Grade 2 students, a facilitator from the local Healthy Baby Club, and a volunteer family and child. The next year it spread to Grade 8 as well as to a second Grade 2 class, and this year Mrs. Cheryl Flynn's Grade 8 class is participating again. Lourdes Elementary was the first school in the province to have an Intermediate class get involved with the *Roots of Empathy* program.

This program makes a significant impact and contribution to the Grade 8 students' lives. While some of the objectives of the Intermediate Health program can be met with *Roots of Empathy*, its ability to make young people reflect on wise decision-making regarding birth control, responsibility, self-respect and empathy is astounding. Students not only empathize with the baby but they get a taste of how much is required of new parents in providing proper care and nurturing for a newborn. As the baby grows up over the ten month visitation schedule, so does the students' understanding of healthy living, respect for themselves, and for their sexuality.

"We invite any school that might be interested in speaking with school personnel for more details and program information to contact Lourdes Elementary," says Principal Terry LaVallee. "Understanding the early adolescent is a difficult endeavor for any educator but

the *Roots of Empathy* program can help teacher and learner relate to each other in a unique and open-minded forum."

Gander students bring school news online

Students at Gander Collegiate have launched their "Spotlight on Schools" Newscast on the web (www.snn-rdr.ca/snn/spotlight/). The school's Media Technology Program partnered with SchoolNet News Network (SNN), a national student journalism web site, to make this project a reality.

Sixty students worked on the project as part of their curriculum. Students were responsible for all aspects of production, from interviewing, scriptwriting, digital video editing, camera work as well as developing their own story ideas.

Coordinator for SchoolNet News, Carmelita Joy-Bolger, said, "Brian Mosher, Media Technology teacher at Gander Collegiate, approached SNN in June of last year about doing a newscast online. It was a natural fit as we've been involved in publishing student articles and multimedia stories since 1996. It's a wonderful experience for the students and gives them strong communication and technology skills."

"What we came up with is an online, national, student news show. It's a show about students, by students and for students," said Mosher. Mosher has been teaching media technology using an in-school TV studio, for the past six years.

"During the past six years I've watched students learn by their own hands. They find their own directions, areas they're really good at. It may be the editor, camera person, script writer or graphic artist. It exposes them to every aspect of television. It's exciting to see them so enthusiastic about learning."

The first show featured stories about a 13-year-old pilot, the youngest person to fly solo in the province, a 30-year tradition at St. Paul's School in Gander, as well as a story on the Aviation School in Gander.

This 30-minute newscast will be broadcast online

the last Friday of each month at 2:30 p.m. NF time. While most of the stories relate to events at Gander Collegiate and the Central Newfoundland area, they invite students and schools from across Newfoundland and Labrador as well as the rest of Canada to send their stories to the "Spotlight on Schools" newsroom. For further information contact Brian Mosher, bmosher@stemnet.ca, or SNN, snn@stemnet.ca.

ST. JOHN'S

Santa's student helpers donate hand-made toys

The workshop at Macdonald Drive Junior High School in St. John's was a busy place in December. Students busily cut and sanded wooden Christmas decorations and toy trucks for children in their area. Their teacher, Mr. Jason Thistle, smiles as he says that "the kids wanted to do this" and he was honored to help them donate toys to make some children's holiday season more pleasant. Before Christmas, CBC Radio and NTV News visited the shop and several of the elves were interviewed. Students and staff of Macdonald Drive Junior High School hope you had a wonderful Christmas and wish everyone a Happy New Year.



Mr. Jason Thistle, along with his elves, display some of the wooden toy trucks which his students donated to needy children this Christmas.

Survey highlights need for common strategic vision, training, and support for teachers

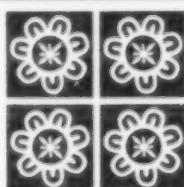
A nation-wide poll conducted on behalf of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) reveals dilemmas and opportunities in teacher use of information and

communication technology (ICT) in publicly funded elementary and secondary schools across the country. Funded by Industry Canada's SchoolNet and conducted by Vector Research, the survey is part of a CTF study of the integration of ICT into Canadian schools and classrooms.

"As key players in the learning environment, teachers would like a voice in the decision-making process with respect to the future use of technology in their school boards and schools," says CTF President Terry Price. "They would like to forge a cohesive and strategic vision which is currently non-existent."

"Clearly, teachers in the survey have accepted computers and ICT in their classes and are integrating ICT in their lessons. Eight out of 10 say computers are essential or important in the way they teach and 98 per cent of teachers in the survey use a computer. Furthermore, two thirds of teachers report using the Internet and instructional CD-ROMS in their classes. One third use desktop publishing for their classes, while half use spreadsheets, computer games and simulations. Nearly half of teachers surveyed use PowerPoint and other presentation software."

(continued on page 6)



Attn: Guidance Counsellors The Ella Manuel Award for 2004

The Ella Manuel Award will be presented in 2004 to assist a young woman in this province to pursue a professional career requiring post-secondary education in science, engineering, environmental studies or medicine. **One award of \$1,500** will be made in memory of Ella Manuel, Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, feminist, and peace activist.

Applicants expecting to graduate this year from Newfoundland and Labrador schools are asked to submit through their school principal, a two-page description of their interests, ambitions and plans for further studies. This must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the principal, including a school phone number in case additional information should be required. The principal's letter should describe the applicant's academic record, financial need and general qualifications, such as leadership capacity, and interest in the fields covered by the award. Copies of the transcripts of marks for Grade 10, 11 and 12 are also required. Only one application from each school will be accepted. Preference will be given to applicants from rural areas.

Completed applications must be received by **April 1, 2004**, by:
Professional Development Division,
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association,
3 Kenimount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1.

Price also explains that in spite of their extensive use of ICT, teachers say they have little voice in decision-making about technology at their boards and schools. They also lack confidence that they are using ICT as well as they should.

"Even though teachers take advantage of computer in-service training, these courses have not closed the gap between teacher's expectations and capabilities. Most teachers feel they are not adequately trained to use computer technology in their classes and lesson plans," says Price.

The survey also shows that in spite of the acceptance and use of classroom technology, 55% of teachers say too much emphasis is placed on computers "to the detriment of other important areas that would improve learning."

"By a wide margin (63% to 34%), teachers disagree that ICT represents the future of education and that eventually students will receive most of their instruction through computers and the Internet."

"The disagreement, however," explains Price, "isn't over computers vs. traditional instruction but rather, over the way to use computers in education."

In spite of the agreement about the potential for using computers in schools, many teachers feel that computers and other instructional technologies are unproven:

- 41% say computers help students learn reasoning and problem solving skills faster than other teaching techniques while 54% disagree.
- 35% agree that students learn more in less time using computers for instruction, while 60% disagree.

Poll findings are based on telephone interviews conducted from May 27 to June 5, 2003 of 880 teachers in publicly funded schools across Canada. The sample was randomly drawn from lists provided by provincial teacher federations.

EDMONTON

Masters Degree in Education – Deafness Studies

Canada is facing a shortage of teachers who have specialized training in working with deaf and hard of hearing children. For the past several years, the University of Alberta has received calls from every province in Canada looking for trained teachers of the deaf to work in both classroom and consulting/itinerant situations.

Training offered at the University of Alberta involves a fourteen-month course based M.Ed. in Deafness Studies in the Department of Educational Psychology. A thesis route is also available. The program includes

studies in language development and literacy, American Sign Language (and other forms of manual communication), psychology of deafness, audiology, oral rehabilitation, curriculum design, and counseling. In addition, specialist training involves a practicum in which field experiences are designed individually and students can be placed in educational settings worldwide.

Graduates of the University of Alberta Deafness Studies program are eligible for specialist certification with the Canadian Association of Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CAEDHH).

For more information please contact Dr. Maryann Bibby, Coordinator, Deafness Studies, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5, Tel: 780 492 3697, Fax: 780 492 1318, email: maryann.bibby@ualberta.ca.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Donations sought for BCTF Forest Fire Relief Fund

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) has established a relief fund to assist teachers and students directly impacted by the forest fire situation in B.C. The fund provides direct grants to teachers who have lost their homes as well as those who incurred additional costs related to evacuation as a result of a forest fire threat. Grants are also being made available to families of students who suffered direct losses due to loss of residence or evacuation. The grants to students are intended to cover back to school costs including school supplies. The fund is being accessed by committees in BCTF locals responsible for assessing the need and allocating resources as necessary. The BCTF has placed \$125,000 into the fund from its own contingency fund and is taking contributions from locals and members.

Contributions from other teacher organizations would be greatly appreciated and acknowledged. Donations to the fund can be forwarded to the BCTF 2003 Forest Fire Relief Fund, BC Teachers' Federation, 550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4P2. Attn: Rob McLaren, Treasurer.

CANADA

EPIC launches design challenge for elementary students

The Environment and Plastics Industry Association (EPIC) has launched the "Let's Reuse It!" Design Challenge, asking students across Canada in Grades 4,

5 and 6 to create a new plastic product using discarded plastic items. The contest was launched in September, with entries being accepted up until 11:59 p.m. EST, Earth Day, April 22, 2004.

A judging panel will choose three winning entries – one from Grade 4, one from Grade 5, and one from Grade 6. The three classes from which the winning entries will be chosen will each receive a free microscope (retail value approximately \$200). Each student in the winning class will also receive a free litterless lunch kit.

EPIC has created a large, four-colour poster (available in English and French) that contains all the necessary contest information. Complete contest details are available on the EPIC web site (www.plastics.ca/teachers), along with a blank entry form and a completed sample entry form. To order copies of the poster, please contact Rita Gauvin, Tel: 905-678-7405, ext. 231 or e-mail rgauvin@cpia.ca with the words "contest poster" in the subject line.

The "Let's Reuse It!" Design Challenge has been designed to encourage students to understand the concept of reuse. It joins a long list of free teaching resources that EPIC makes available to the educational community, including interactive tours, crossword puzzles, activity books, course curricula, an on-line adventure game, newsletters and more. To find out more about the free teaching resources, visit the Teachers' Resource Area at www.plastics.ca/teachers.

CMEC releases training tool for French-language teachers

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) have released a teacher's resource kit designed for Kindergarten to Grade 2 teachers in French-language schools outside Quebec. This tool will enable teachers to help students living in francophone communities in minority areas to grow and develop in a flourishing academic, social, and cultural environment. Developed by a team representing several disciplines, the multi-media kit includes a CD-ROM, a printed document, and a fictional journal of a teacher's school year. All the components of the kit enable teachers to sensitize or resensitize young students to their mother tongue and culture. This new kit also encourages lifelong learning in teachers, since it supports professional growth based on experience, sharing, and reflection.

Consultations were held at key points in the kit's development with parents, the education community, and researchers in faculties of education. Funding for the project was provided by the participating provinces and territories and by the Department of Canadian Heritage.

"CMEC is a longstanding advocate for the promotion of the official languages in education," said the Honourable Pierre Reid, Quebec's Minister of Education, who is Chair of CMEC. "My colleagues and I are very pleased that CMEC is again making a significant contribution to French-language education, and we intend to continue our work in this area."

CMEC is an intergovernmental body composed of the ministers responsible for elementary-secondary and advanced education from the provinces and territories. Through CMEC, ministers share information and undertake projects in areas of mutual interest and concern.

Statistics Canada establishes international classroom activity

An international classroom activity for students aged 8 to 18 has been established by Statistics Canada, www.censusatschool.ca.

Students complete a brief online survey, gathering simple information about themselves, such as their height, pets or favorite school subject. Teachers can access their class responses to use in math activities on graphing, tables and spreadsheets, fractions and percentages, statistics and probability, and data management.

Participating classes will contribute to a Canadian and international database. Teachers and students can use this database to compare their class results with those of other countries.

Collect real data for fun and relevant learning. Teachers are encouraged to get their students involved now.

SchoolNet GrassRoots funds are available for classes that create web pages about their Census at School experience.

Teachers urged to support "Take Back Our Airwaves" campaign

Canadian teachers are being urged to support the "Take Back Our Airwaves" campaign to strengthen Canadian programming and the CBC. The campaign is organized by Our Public Airwaves (OPA), a public broadcasting advocacy group. OPA was launched earlier last year with support from the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) as well as many CTF Member organizations and OTF affiliates. Doug Willard, Past President of CTF is an active member of OPA's Coordinating Committee.

OPA is asking concerned teachers to log onto its web site at www.PublicAirwaves.ca and sign a petition to the Prime Minister.

(continued on page 8)



It calls on the federal government to put the "Canadian" back into Canadian broadcasting. More specifically, it advocates implementation of a recent report by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

That report, released last June, calls on the government to increase funding to the CBC as well as the Canadian Television fund, which subsidizes production of Canadian programming.

"There's a real danger that they'll just let it gather dust on a shelf. We can't let that happen," says Arthur Lewis, the group's executive director. "We've got to keep the pressure on the government to implement the report. There are two huge problems in Canadian broadcasting today. One is the lack of Canadian entertainment programming on TV in prime time and the other is the continuing decline of the CBC due to underfunding."

"CBC has a lot of fans across the country," he says. "But everybody knows that the CBC is not what it used to be and that's primarily because of the repeated cuts in government funding in recent years. And we feel there's a real danger that the new Martin government will impose yet another cut in its February budget."

Budget cuts to the CBC have also been a major factor contributing to that other problem – the absence of Canadian TV drama and entertainment.

This has an enormous impact on the ability to sustain an independent Canadian culture as Canada moves economically closer to the United States. "We're selling out our culture and shipping it south of the border," says Lewis.

Our Public Airwaves is not trying to turn off the taps on programming from the U.S., but it does want our TV networks to offer more Canadian alternatives. To do that, the government has to increase support for the Canadian Television Fund, which was drastically cut earlier this year. Canadian drama and other types of TV programming with high production values require government subsidy because the Canadian market is too small to recover the entire cost from advertising revenue.

To find out more about Our Public Airwaves or to sign the petition, visit www.PublicAirwaves.ca.

ISABEL HAWCO-BURSEY, 1946 – 2003

Isabel was a kind, generous person who exemplified in her school and family life a quiet, energetic and helpful enthusiasm to assist and be there consistently, whether for a family member, friend, student or fellow teacher. Besides the genuine gifts of love and untiring giving to her family and friends, she exemplified a person with a keen mathematical mind and entrepreneurial skill that enriched both her teaching years and family business with her first husband, Jerome, and son, Paddy.

Isabel, the daughter of Ron and Mae Walsh, was born and received her early education in Bellevue, Trinity Bay. In her early junior high school years, she moved with her family to Avondale and there completed her education at Assumption High School. Following in her mother's footsteps, Isabel chose the teaching profession. She began her studies at Litledale and continued at Memorial. Most of her 30 year teaching career was spent at Holy Cross in Holyrood, but she also taught in Bellevue and Marysville, and in Toronto, Ontario. Isabel gave her time freely to involvement with school committees, her local NLTA Branch and the NLTA Primary Council.

In 1966 Isabel married Jerome Hawco. For 19 years, with their son, Paddy, Isabel and Jerome shared the love of traveling in their trailers, camping, spending time with a very wide circle of friends and developing the family business. In 1985, with Jerome's sudden death, Isabel was left to continue her teaching career and manage the family business on her own.

Near her retirement she met Field Bursey and they married in 1994. Together they shared their mutual interest in and love for family, travel and business. During these years Isabel delighted in precious time spent with her beloved grandson, Kyle, and granddaughter, Jenna.

With quiet, dignified strength Isabel fought her cancer valiantly to the end. Even in the last days she exemplified courage, fortitude and the concern for others rather than herself. Her final days were blessed as she was surrounded by the love of her son Paddy, daughter-in-law, Lisa, the Hawco and Walsh families, her husband, Field, and her extended Bursey family. Her gifts to family, the teaching profession and friends will live on in their memories and hearts forever.

(Submitted by Gloria MacDonald, a friend and co-worker)

PRATT BURTON, 1930 – 2003

On December 2, 2003, family, friends, colleagues and students were saddened by the death of Pratt Burton.

As a young man Pratt began his teaching career which spanned several decades. His love for teaching

took him to the communities of Tilt Cove, Perry's Island, Lewisporte, and Stephenville. From Stephenville, he returned to La Scie to take the position of principal at Hillside Elementary until his retirement in 1985.

During his teaching career Pratt touched the lives of numerous students through his commitment to hard work and he strived to bring out the best in his students.

In his retirement years he spent time at his cabin, traveling around the province with his wife and friends, relaxing with a good book, and walking in the woods. He was an active member of Zion United Church, AOTS (As One That Serves) men's fellowship group, and an organist in the church for quite a number of years.

Deepest sympathy is extended to Pratt's loving wife Margaret, and their children Danny, Diana, and Richard. (Submitted by Madonna Boone, Hillside Elementary, La Scie)

CHERYL SMART

On December 8, 2003, in the presence of her family, Cheryl Smart passed away suddenly at the Health Sciences Centre in St. John's. Her family, friends, colleagues and students were shocked and saddened by her sudden death. Cheryl Smart, age 35, was Guidance Counsellor and Special Education Teacher at Immaculate Conception School on Bell Island.

Cheryl was born and raised in Lethbridge, Bonavista Bay. After completing high school she attended Memorial University where she received a Bachelor of Primary Education and Bachelor of Special Education. She then started her teaching career near her home in Bonavista. She went on to complete a Masters Degree in Counselling at Mount St. Vincent University, after which she was hired as a school counsellor in Churchill Falls. In September of 2000, Cheryl accepted a position at Immaculate Conception School. The following year she made Bell Island her home when she moved to Lance Cove.

While at Immaculate Conception School she became an advocate for children with special needs. In addition to her teaching responsibilities she also initiated a counselling group for female students, helped start the school's first student council and served on several school committees. Cheryl's love for life was echoed in her enthusiasm and dedication to the children in her care. She gave her time unselfishly to others and was always there for the students and staff whenever needed. She also volunteered within the community and served as a resource person with the Wabana Boys and Girls Club.

Her friendship was her gift to all who knew her. She loved to laugh and her ever-present smile was contagious. Not only did Cheryl love to teach, she also loved

to learn. She modeled the importance of life long learning to her students and was about to start a second master's degree in Counselling Psychology at Memorial University in January 2004. Cheryl treasured and loved her friends and family, which could be easily seen and felt in her devotion to her parents, Rowena and Carson, her brothers, nieces and nephew.

Cheryl will be sadly missed by all who have had the privilege of knowing her. We are certain that heaven has a new angel.

(Submitted by friends and colleagues Reg Durdle and Teresita McCarthy)

BILL WHEATON

Bill Wheaton lived and worked in the town of Nain, Labrador, for 11 years, leaving in the summer of 2001.

At Jens Haven Memorial School Bill was a Grade 8 home room teacher and art teacher. He introduced silk screen print making to the students, was Chairperson of the first School Council, represented north coast teachers on the Provincial Executive Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, and assisted student teachers and support staff in lobbying the Labrador School Board for fair treatment through the Newfoundland Association of Public Employees.

As a citizen, Bill was Deputy Mayor of the Town Council of Nain and represented Council on the Board of the Martin Martin Group Home (a facility for young offenders), as well as the Ulapitsaijet Steering Committee (a group formed following a listening process which reported on residents' concerns with respect to social problems - Tussatet).

A confidante of, friend to, and role model for our young people, Bill was involved with setting up, guiding and working with Innu and Inuit drama groups (Davis Inlet, Hopedale and Nain) and the Nunatsiavut Drum Dancers of Nain.

Bill will be remembered by many people in Nain, both young and old, as a passionate and committed person, often outspoken and controversial, who was a crusader for the less fortunate, a loyal friend, and lover of our natural environment which he enjoyed through his hunting, fishing, and hiking jaunts. His love of and passion for the Northern Labrador landscape is reflected in his art and his craft, much of which is displayed in homes and public facilities throughout the community. Of special interest are wall murals which Bill and some of his students created in the school, the Nain Husky Centre, Day Care Centre and the Okalakatiget Society television studio.

We will remember you Bill.
(Submitted by all of Bill's friends in Nain)



Isabel Hawco-Bursey



Pratt Burton



Cheryl Smart



Bill Wheaton



Lily Cole

Lily B. Cole has been actively involved with the NLTA since the beginning of her career in the early 1980s. She has most recently been involved at the Provincial level through membership on the Collective Bargaining Committee that put together the opening package for the last round of negotiations, and was a member of the Professional Issues in Teaching Committee (PITCOM). These two committees exhibit Lily's commitment to both arms of our professional Association – Economic Benefits and Professional Development. She strongly believes that a teaching force with access to effective PD, is one that not only has a stronger professional ethic and level of satisfaction, but also is able to more effectively demand from our employers greater benefits, befitting our status as a truly professional force of educators.

Lily B. has served on many branch committees including the organizing committee for the only CONTACT Conference held outside of the major urban centres of the Atlantic provinces (Burin-Marystown). She has been a member of the Labrador West Branch, the Baie Verte Branch, and is presently a member of the Finance and Property Committee, the Curriculum Committee and Pathways Working Group.

Lily teaches at Pearce Junior High School in Salt Pond.



Dean Ingram

Dean's NLTA involvement has spanned his entire 11-year career. He served at the branch level in the capacity of Branch President (Trinity, T. Bay Branch – 1993-98; 2000-01), Political Action Officer (Trinity, T. Bay Branch, 1999-00), Professional Development Officer (Clarenbridge Branch, 2002) and as Vice-President of the Clarenbridge Branch. On the provincial level he has served on provincial committees including the last Collective Bargaining Committee. In addition to serving at the branch executive table he has also been heavily involved in the Vista District School Administrators Special Interest Council. He is presently a member of the Staff Negotiations Committee and the Finance and Property Committee.

Dean is a member of the Clarenville Area Crime Prevention Committee and volunteers his time as a First Aid Instructor to numerous local groups between Arnold's Cove and Bonavista. In addition, he is also the Chairperson of the Lone Valley Community Access Site.

Dean is a teaching principal at Swift Current Academy and he resides in Clarenville with his wife and two-year-old son.



Edward Moore

Ed has taught with the Avalon West School District for the past 26 years. He began his teaching career as a substitute and replacement teacher and went on to teach in Mount Carmel, St. Mary's Bay; St. Joseph's, St. Mary's Bay; St. Bride's, Placentia Bay and Southern Harbour, Placentia Bay before returning to Placentia where he is presently a Grade 7 teacher at St. Edward's Elementary.

Ed has been actively involved with the NLTA for the past 20 years as a school representative and Vice-President and President of the Placentia Branch. He served on the NLTA Provincial Committee of Equality Rights in Education and on the NLTA School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee. He has previously served as a member of the Finance and Property Committee and Chair of the NLTA Election Procedures Committee for Province-Wide Voting.

Ed is currently Chair of the Finance and Property Committee, and a member of the Pooled Investment Committee.



Questions & Answers

School Closure and Salary Issues

by PERRY DOWNEY



Q. Does a substitute teacher get paid if school is closed due to weather conditions, lack of heating, or any cause as specified in the Schools Act?

A. If a substitute teacher is contracted to work at a school on a particular day and that school is subsequently closed due to inclement weather, lack of heating, or other cause specified under Section 32 of the Schools Act, then the substitute has been "deemed to have kept school" and therefore **MUST** receive salary for that period of time. **This requirement is effective whether or not the teacher received prior notification of the school closure before leaving for school or arriving at school.**

The particular article of the Collective Agreement dealing with this issue is Article 49.04, and it distinguishes between situations when the school is closed for weather or any other cause (under Section 32 of the Schools Act), as compared to situations when the school remains open, but previously contracted substitute services are not required for some other reason.

"This requirement is effective whether or not the teacher received prior notification of the school closure before leaving for school or arriving at school."

Article 49.04 (a) states that: *For salary purposes, substitute teachers shall be deemed to have kept school on any day or part thereof where the school is closed pursuant to Section 32 of the Schools Act, 1997.* That section of the Schools Act requires that a teacher in a school shall, for the purpose of determining payment of salary, be considered to have taught on a day or any part thereof when the school is closed for any of the reasons contained in that section. These reasons would include: inclement weather, by order of the Minister of Health

for health reasons, school repairs, failure of the sewage system or other cause of a similar nature, lack of heat, etc. Thus, if school is closed, under Section 32 and Article 49.04 (a), previously contracted substitute teachers are "deemed to have kept school" and must receive salary.

Q. When would a substitute not get paid?

A. If the services of a substitute teacher are not required for reasons other than school closure under Section 32, and the teacher is notified before arriving at the school, then the substitute teacher doesn't receive pay. For example, if a substitute teacher was contracted to substitute for another teacher who would be attending a workshop, and the workshop was cancelled, the substitute teacher would not be paid for the day, provided prior notification (i.e. notification prior to reporting for duty) was given.

These latter situations are covered under Article 49.04 (b), which states that: *For salary purposes, substitute teachers shall be deemed to have kept school on any day or part thereof where previously contracted substitute services are not required for any other reason(s), and the substitute teacher is not notified prior to reporting for duty at the school that his or her services are not required.*

Additional information on this issue can be found in the NLTA Infosheet "Substitute Teacher Member and Benefits." Inquiries on this matter should be directed to the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer, Benefits and Economic Services Division, at the NLTA.



Leadership at Work

A PD Success Story – Made Right Here

by BEVERLEY PARK

Educators must have the courage to ask tough questions and the skills to find honest answers. This statement, from Thomas Guskey, has become an integral part of Leadership at Work philosophy and is frequently quoted. Guskey is one among many educational writers who has guided our work on the Leadership at Work program. In keeping with the principle that to steal ideas from one person is plagiarism but to steal from many is research, let me just say that there are many such statements, principles or ideas in this paper “liberated” from various thinkers/writers... all in the name of research... and with apologies to those original sources.

The quote serves as an appropriate entry point to this article because Leadership at Work is about educators – public school leaders. It is about tough questions – those too often not asked in favour of comfort and for fear of reprisal. It is about courage – the courage not to avoid the truly tough issues and to meet them head on. It is about skills – the skills of leadership. It is about honest answers – as opposed to “safe answers.”

Let me begin by describing Leadership at Work, and then I will return to the quote.

The Program

In the Spring of 1998, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association entered into an exciting partnership with one of the province's school districts, Avalon West. Together we developed Leadership at Work. The title can be interpreted as putting our leadership skills to work, and it is also leadership “at work” in that the program is focused on the principal or vice-principal (or, in some districts, department head or classroom teacher) at his/her workplace.

Leadership at Work was initiated as a response to needs expressed by principals and vice-principals. Rather than adopt an existing model, the NLTA partnered with a team of leaders at the Avalon West School District and used real-context situations and positive,

past professional development experiences to determine needs and develop a dynamic program which involves participants in problem solving, professional growth, individual and collaborative learning, and community building.

At the outset there was a consultation process and the program was built around the following objectives:

- to initiate a leadership development program to provide support to school based leaders;
- to build strong learning organizations;
- to examine leadership roles within the learning organizations (schools/districts);
- to establish leadership networks;
- to reflect upon our leadership practices;
- to improve our leadership practices/skills;
- to help create more effective schools and more collaborative school cultures;
- to use and spread effective leadership practices at the school level; and
- to celebrate the joy of our work.

The Components

Initially, participants agree to attend a two/three day seminar largely devoted to team building, goal setting, and developing a common vision. Following this, over a two- to three-year period, sessions are ongoing. All have a common format and use a cycle of reflecting on and sharing experiences, examining professional literature, exploring alternatives and innovations. Sessions are highly interactive and also provide opportunities for fun and social learning. Once a session is over, the “at work” assignment challenges participants to take new ideas back to the workplace, to experiment and then report back at the next session.

Participants in the program take responsibility for planning and facilitating these ongoing sessions, and the planning itself has become an important small-group learning experience. Session topics are decided by the participants and have included:

- Leadership in a Learning Organization
- Team Building
- Managing Conflict
- Setting and Reaching Personal Goals
- Legal Issues Around Instruction
- How to Influence Teaching and Learning
- Empowerment
- Shared Decision Making
- Time Management

From Principles to Practice

This program is built on several principles of learning, and our success and enjoyment so far supports these principles:

- Learning for leaders, or for anyone else, is a social process. Warm-up activities, games, interactive sessions, and social gatherings provide the connectedness for collective learning. Learning is not only an intellectual activity, but a cultural and social activity lived out in the presence of others.
- Culture is built through shared stories, common commitments, and learning from success and failures. Our group has begun to develop a shared history based on reflection and learning, and acts of willing sacrifice for the group. In so doing, we came to see how important all these elements are in schools and in the school district.
- Our learning as leaders is best exemplified when we influence our own workplace. Some of the outcomes and learning that principals and vice principals report are: better organized staff meetings; more interactive, social learning at the staff level; more confident leadership; greater resolve to influence teaching and learning and belief in our ability to do so; better understanding of the need to empower others; greater sensitivity to culture building; deeper reflection on leadership practices; heightened awareness of the potential of reaching out to others, giving and receiving help; and greater satisfaction in the role of school leader.

The Quote

Now, to return to the quote... How could this collaborative endeavour be considered courageous? First of all, the very collaboration that is indispensable to the project could not have come about without courage and a willingness to take risks. While the provincial teachers' organization could initiate and support the program, it was essential that individual boards make the commitment and provide the incentives and the support to ensure program viability. The NLTA has been an essential resource in all phases of the project but each school system has been involved in designing a unique program to respond to its particular circumstances.

For a teachers' organization to initiate a program and to partner with a school district was not, in itself, a giant

step. But to back away from the "branding" and allow (even encourage) districts to put their mark on the initiative could be seen as courageous. The culture of turf protection and the desire to get credit has often stood in the way of good things getting done. There are also issues of trust when one hands over a project. Will the integrity, the intent, be maintained? When the question is asked, "Who gets credit for this initiative?" it takes real courage to answer, "Who cares, as long as the job is done properly." Recently, with the emergence of the Ministry of Education as a key supporter of, and partner in, the program, the foundation of trust, collaboration and respect are being expanded even further. Had any of the partners been focused on optics, yet another excellent project might never have reached its potential. The program itself is an example of shared leadership – of effective leadership at work.

What are the tough questions? The tough questions are always the ones we don't know the answers to but have to struggle with, the questions we're uncomfortable asking because we may appear silly or naive, or the questions to which we may get answers that we don't like. As school leaders, we cannot just work within our comfort zones. In a community of learners the tough questions must be asked as well as the not-so-tough

ones, so that we can all find the deeper, less obvious answers that can help us determine how we should act. The skills the quote calls for are the skills of capacity building which will deepen and disperse the leadership and build community.

The honest answers take time to emerge. As a leader, I take pride in my school. I naturally resist discussing behaviours and results that are less than exemplary. There's a reluctance to share those realities. It's a part of the age-old tradition of not airing "dirty" laundry or keeping family secrets. We all know how deeply destructive that practice can be – back to the courage again. In the Leadership at Work program, people find, through the consciously designed process of community building, a professional "safe" space to say "We're not doing as well as we should in this area" or "Here's our situation... we could use help here." Developing this comfortable, safe, trusting relationship takes time. And it comes about earlier for some than for others, but most participants get there eventually.

Throughout the implementation process, we have continuously monitored the program using surveys, evaluation forms, and informal anecdotes. In keeping with the principle of the program, we have made adjustments. Our province is diverse and dynamic, and it would be foolhardy to ignore the impact of context. Leadership at Work is under way in all ten English school districts in the province. And because of the diversity and contextual differences from district to district, each program is unique. One size does not fit all. One of the key factors in the success of this program is its "made for us, by us" approach.

The Newfoundland and Labrador government has a rather clever media campaign to highlight the many creative ventures which have led to products "made right here." (You decide where the punctuation should be!) Leadership at Work is another such success story.

For more information on the Leadership at Work model, contact Beverley Park, Administrative Officer, Professional Development Division, NLTA.



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Sherri Sheppard

Presentation Junior High School

Corner Brook



Sherri graduated from St. Peter's Academy as valedictorian and student of the year in 1987. After a year of General Studies at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College she decided that working with children was something she wanted to pursue as a career. She then enrolled at the University of Guelph in the Faculty of Applied Science to study child psychology. While at Guelph Sherri decided that Education, in particular the education of youth, was her true vocation. This led her to Memorial University of Newfoundland where she studied Arts and Education. Sherri graduated in 1992 with a Bachelor of Arts and Education; a concentration in the areas of French and English.

"Because of school representatives, teachers are more aware of the issues facing teachers and through their school representative have a voice within the Association."

In the same year Sherri began an internship at Presentation Junior High School in Corner Brook. Under the careful guidance of Denise Rumboldt she successfully concluded her internship and was eager to begin her career as a teacher. Sherri has held several replacement positions and has substituted at most schools in Corner Brook. Sherri also taught at Bonne Bay Academy in Woody Point for one year, a place that she has fond memories of.

From Woody Point Sherri found herself at Presentation Junior High, the school where she had had her first teaching experience. She has been teaching at Presentation Junior High for the past six years and is involved in School Council, the Student Leadership Committee, the Teacher Induction Program, is a Cross Country Running Coach and is a School Representative for the NLTA.

Sherri has been a school representative for seven years. Her involvement with the NLTA began while teaching in Woody Point. Her principal then suggested that she become involved with the Table Mountain Branch as she wanted to learn more about the Association and its membership. In that year she became a school representative and it was then she realized the significant role a school representative plays in bridging the gap between teachers and their respective branch. Sherri continues her involvement with the NLTA as school representative and sees her role as an important one. "A school representative not only disseminates information, but ensures that your school is represented and well informed." For Sherri, being a school representative is about communication and awareness. "Because of school representatives, teachers are more aware of the issues facing teachers and through their school representative have a voice within the Association," says Sherri.

This was the sentiment echoed at the School Representative Seminar held last fall in Corner Brook. It was through this seminar that Sherri felt her role as school representative was validated. Many of the issues and concerns that were raised at the 1999 seminar were clearly dealt with in the time following the 1999 seminar.

"The turnout at our recent seminar was tremendous and certainly speaks volumes about the commitment of school representatives to their colleagues and their Association," says Sherri. She looks forward to many years of involvement with the NLTA and challenges others to become more involved and to take ownership and control of their Association, thus ensuring the NLTA will remain a strong voice for teachers.

If you know of a teacher you feel should be profiled in a future issue of The Bulletin, please contact Lesley-Ann Browne, Editor, The Bulletin, Tel: 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 228 or email labrowne@nlta.nl.ca.



A Twist in Life

Caring for Aging Parents

by KATHY TAYLOR-ROGERS

The kids have all grown up and no longer need you to 'run around' after them; you are just beginning to re-assess your life and your new found freedom. But wait, Mother has not been doing so well since Dad passed away and you need to check in on her at least twice a week. The reality of life is that many of us will reach a stage at which we will have at least one parent who requires some assistance. The degree of assistance will depend on many factors including age, health problems, support network, companionship, independence level, etc. Coming to terms with this reality of life can be very difficult. Whether you have a positive view of your childhood or whether you did not have such an ideal childhood, our parents are important people in our lives and their welfare is very important to us. This makes it difficult to come to terms with their loss of independence and need to rely on us for possibly the first time in our lives. It becomes very important for us to come to terms with some of the emotions that accompany this transition in life so that we can move through this stage in a healthy manner.

Even if we are fortunate enough that our parents remain healthy and active well into their eighties, there may be other concerns that arise. Are they safe? Are they eating properly? Are they lonely? These are just a few questions that may create worry. The reality is that people over the age of 75 can be in a vulnerable stage of their lives. Risks are intensified when they are living alone or with a spouse in the same age range. They are weaker and physically less able to defend themselves, hence can be a target for thieves. They can oftentimes be lonely and unwittingly allow con artists into their lives. Elderly people are often victims of phone scams and 'door to door' con artists. These types of individuals can play on their loneliness, build their trust and con them out of money or possessions. It is always wise to find out who is spending time at your parent's home and talk to them about these kinds of dangers. Our province is filled with kind hearted, generous people who do not realize that there can be such cruel and deceitful people among us.

There are a significant number of our elderly that

have the misfortune of being stricken by debilitating illnesses or disease. This can leave them unable to function independently or in a situation whereby they know that at some stage in their future they will require care. Some of the more common illnesses that impact on our elderly population are Parkinson's disease, Osteoporosis, Huntington's disease, Stroke, Congestive Heart Failure, Diabetes related illnesses, Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia. If a parent has any diagnosed condition that will likely result in deterioration of abilities then the family needs to begin planning at the earliest opportunity. As soon as the family members are made aware of the condition, there needs to be a meeting scheduled with the physician so that the family can be informed of the extent of the illness and prognosis. Once the family, which includes the parent(s), have all of the information about the diagnosis, expected progression of the disease, possible ways that the disease will impact the parent, their ability to function independently, and treatment plan, they can openly communicate and develop a plan to best meet the parent's needs. It is important that the afflicted parent and their spouse be involved in every aspect of the planning to the extent of their ability. There is a tendency among children to want to 'protect' their parents from bad news. This is done with good intentions, but your parents are adults and have the right to participate in the decisions made around their lives and care plans. I have seen families who have spent enormous amounts of time and energy making plans for their parents without their input and when they finally spoke to the parents about the plan the parents advised that it was not what they wanted. Inclusion of parents changes if there is dementia involved to the point that they cannot fully understand and appreciate the situation.

In the planning phase, you should involve as many family members as possible. It is important to keep those who are living out of the area informed, as this is as much their responsibility as it is any other family member. There are ways that they can contribute to care planning despite their distance. For example, they may agree to schedule some holiday time to spend with

the parent(s) at the same time that you plan a holiday out of the area. This way you can go and enjoy your holiday without having to worry, and they can feel good about doing something to contribute to the needed care. It is important that the responsibilities for care do not get taken on by only one or two family members where the family is larger. The family will need to get information together on resources available in the community, such as meals-on-wheels programs, day care programs at the local nursing home, respite care programs, medic alert/life-line services, palliative care programs, psychogeriatric assessment options, seniors apartments or cottages, nursing home placement options, homemaker services and home support funding options. A well-developed care plan should spread out the needed care so that the burden for care does not rest with one person. The above listed resources can be useful whether an elderly parent is ill or in good health. Our lives are already filled with many different responsibilities, so it has become imperative to find external resources to assist with the care of aging parents instead of trying to do everything ourselves. A caregiver who provides care in a realistic, balanced way will be much more helpful and less prone to caregiver 'burnout'.

Relying on outside agencies and resources to assist in providing care for aging parents is a good way to ensure that care is provided without 'overburdening' family members. Children should not feel guilty when they do not do everything themselves. It is more detrimental to try to take on more than you can reasonably do, as in time, resentment cannot help but build up and this can contribute to the destruction of family relationships. It can also lead to guilt when parents pass away, as you begin to regret things that were said or thought during the stressful time that care was being provided. Although parents can initially be resistant to 'strangers' coming in to their home, if suitable people can be found to do the work it can provide wonderful companionship for them.

Whether your parent(s) are healthy or have medical problems it is always wise to have discussions about what arrangements they would want in the event of different medical complications or in the event of their death. If they were to have a stroke and no longer be able to eat on their own, would they want to be tube fed? These are the kinds of questions best discussed with the family doctor and put into an Advanced Health Care Directive. This directive is a written document that your doctor can keep on file and you can keep a copy with you in the event that you ever need hospitalization. This ensures that your wishes are respected. It is very difficult to expect a family to make these kinds of decisions on a parent's behalf in a time of crisis. It may never be needed, but in the event that it is, it is very reassuring

to know that you are doing what your parent would have wanted. Discussions about wills and funeral arrangements are also important. These can be difficult subjects to bring up but this is why it is much more important to have these discussions while parents are in good health, as it can be even more difficult to raise these topics when their health is failing and you do not want to send messages of lost hope.

Everyone handles crisis and change differently and some of us are able to cope with life transitions better than others. When we are fortunate enough to see our parents enjoy good health throughout their later years, then this phase of life may not create many challenges for us. On the other hand, for any number of reasons, dealing with this phase of life can be quite overwhelming and we need to be cognizant of how we are coping with this new reality. It is important to talk to someone about your emotions surrounding what is happening. If you find it too difficult to talk to those close to you then you may want to consider seeking the ear of a professional counsellor. To be able to provide care to others we must ensure that we take care of ourselves first. If we do not ensure that what we do for others is balanced with being kind to ourselves, then we will overdo it and, instead of providing care, we will end up needing care.

Kathy Taylor Rogers is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Kathy Taylor Rogers (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265).

"The reality of life is that many of us will reach a stage at which we will have at least one parent who requires some assistance."

New COSS Special Interest Council Executive Formed

President

Keith Adey, School Psychologist, School District #5

Vice-President

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COSS

How to Achieve a Healthy Body Image?

by NATALIE BEAUSOLEIL & GLENDORA BOLAND

Throughout Canada, February 1 to 7, 2004, is Eating Disorder Awareness Week (EDAW). For information on EDAW see the National Eating Disorder Information Centre's web site, www.nedic.ca. The increase in eating disturbances and body image problems among youth are of concern to educators and health professionals. As members of the Body Image Network, we believe that educators can actively promote a healthy positive image for themselves, their students, colleagues and loved ones.

How can we suggest concrete ways of achieving a positive body image? Where do we start? A positive body image has to do with self-esteem, self-care and loving friends and family, with the sense of joy one gets in being creative through work, physical activity and arts, through moving one's body and noticing just how wonderful our body is as it carries us through life. Our body is life itself. A positive body image involves the acceptance of and pride in oneself, with one's imperfections. It also involves the acceptance of people of all sizes, shapes, colours and levels of physical ability.

"The challenge is to create supportive school environments that make more healthy choices available and accessible to all our students. Imagine the impact on the health of our students when the messages in the classroom are supported by our school environment."

Unfortunately though, most Canadian girls and women as well as an increasing number of men and boys, are dissatisfied with their bodies, whether or not a particular individual is clinically considered overweight or obese. There are women and men, girls and boys, who engage in a range of practices dangerous to their health, from unhealthy eating to eating disorders. Many

young women think that adopting healthy eating practices mean not eating enough or not eating at all.

The Society for Nutrition Education recognizes that eating disorders, hazardous weight loss, nutrient deficiencies, obesity, size discrimination, and body hatred are all interrelated and need to be addressed in comprehensive ways that do no harm.

"Current research reinforces the idea of preventative strategies: strategies that focus on healthy lifestyle/body image as opposed to, for example, use of guest speakers and/or lesson plans which often glamorize eating disorders by focusing specifically on them. Research suggests the focus should be on those outcomes which promote healthy living practices rather than on those specific to eating disorders and weight control practices." (*Memorandum re. Anorexia/Bulimia – A new Approach* from Joan Casey, Program Development Specialist, Curriculum and Learning Resources Section, Department of Education, November 15, 2001)

The comprehensive school health model on which the province's curriculum is based on provides a suitable framework for such strategies. It supports the balanced approach to body image, healthy eating and physical activity as promoted by Health Canada's VITALITY program. The VITALITY approach represents a shift in thinking about weight and its relationship to healthy living. (*Memorandum re. Anorexia/Bulimia*, *ibid*)

Additional information about the VITALITY program can be found at Health Canada's web site: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/nutrition/pube/vitality_books/english.htm. Also look for *The VITALITY Approach: A Guide for Leaders* at: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/educators.htm, or through the Publications Unit, Health Canada, Tel: 613-954-5995.

Teachers involved with courses such as Health (Grades 6-8), Home Economics (Grades 7-9) and Family Studies, as well as the newly implemented multidisciplinary course Healthy Living 1200 can match objectives/outcomes by incorporating *The VITALITY Approach* in lesson plans and learning activities. (*Memorandum re. Anorexia/Bulimia*, *ibid*)

We are not denying that obesity exists. But it is important to locate the concerns with obesity within their historical, social and political contexts. Concerns with obesity are not new, but scientific research in the area has grown exponentially in the last few decades and so has the media coverage of this issue (for more details on the history of insurance, medical, public health and media discourses on obesity, see G.A. Gaesser's book *Big Fat Lies: The Truth About Your Weight and Your Health*, Carlsbad, CA: Gurze Books, 2002). Ironically this is happening while individuals in Canada and in the United States are becoming bigger. Three factors explain this weight gain: a sedentary life style, eating high fat over processed food, and dieting! Diets as a weight loss method in fact do not work since when one diets the body adjusts to less food and then uses less energy. Moreover, continuous or "yo-yo" dieting, leads to weight gain and, most importantly, to health complications. Needless to say, the obesity panic is wonderful news for the weight loss industry, which already makes billions of dollars fostering women's, and an increasing number of men's, insecurities. Since diets do not work, the weight loss industry is guaranteed an ever increasing pool of customers in a never ending vicious circle.

The challenge is to create supportive school environments that make more healthy choices available and accessible to all our students. Imagine the impact on the health of our students when the messages in the classroom are supported by our school environment. How can educators make a difference? We all have a role to play. Look to involve everyone. School councils, student councils and community partners are ready-made and are great change agents/allies. Does your school provide a supportive environment for healthy eating and active living? Take a healthy step in the right direction for your health... you will benefit and so will your students.

For more information contact Glendora Boland at glendoraboland@hcssjr.nf.ca.

Natalie Beausoleil, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor with Community Medicine at Memorial University who has written numerous publications in the social sciences.

Glendora Boland B.Sc. R. Dt., is a member of the Body Image Network and Chair for the Coalition for School Nutrition.



12 Questions about RRSPs

by PAT HOGAN

Q. What is an RRSP?

A. A registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) is a trust established in keeping with the Income Tax Act to hold certain investments intended for use in retirement. It is not a "type" of investment, rather an investment vehicle or a savings plan that may contain various investment products. An RRSP is simply the container that may hold guaranteed investment certificates, cash, various types of bonds, stocks or common shares, and mutual funds or segregated funds comprising these securities. Under current rules, at least 70% of the "book value" of your RRSP must be in Canadian securities – the remaining 30% may hold U.S. or international/global securities (called "foreign content").

Q. How do I distinguish between "registered" and "non registered" savings?

A. A registered savings plan is registered with CCRA (the Tax department) under the Income Tax Act. This plan operates under very defined regulations and specific tax rules apply. It is funded by "before-tax" dollars and receives favorable tax treatment. An example would be an RRSP or any registered pension plan like the NLTA Teacher Pension Plan.

A non-registered savings plan refers to any other savings plan, e.g. a bank account or an investment account. It is funded by "after tax" dollars (tax paid capital) and unfortunately receives no tax breaks. For this reason, maximizing your RRSP is always advised before considering starting a non-registered account for retirement funds.

Q. Why would I need an RRSP?

A. (a) To provide retirement income where no other private or employer's pension plan is in

place, e.g. a self-employed person or an employee with no pension plan;

(b) To augment retirement income for one or both partners where there is an employer pension plan in place;

(c) To supplement CPP and OAS benefits in the future.

Note: An ideal retirement income would target an income level of about 70% of pre-retirement income through pension plan membership and/or individual retirement savings programs.

Q. How does an RRSP work?

A. A formal contract is arranged between the issuer and an individual. Contributions are made into the RRSP at the discretion of the individual up to a yearly maximum contribution limit of 18% of last year's earned income, to a maximum of \$14,500 for 2003.

Note: Your Teacher Pension contributions (pension adjustment) must be deducted from this amount, in effect reducing your RRSP contribution limit.

An RRSP "matures" when it begins to provide a retirement income. All plans must mature by the end of the year the owner turns age 69. All RRSP withdrawals are fully taxed at your tax rate.

Q. What about the contributions?

A. (a) Contributions are tax deductible – one of the few tax breaks we get from the government! In Newfoundland and Labrador, most teachers are in the 38% tax bracket; so for each \$1,000 we contribute to an RRSP, we save \$381.60 in taxes. We are out-of-pocket \$618.40.

(b) Contributions and the accumulating investment income are tax-deferred and sheltered within the RRSP – enjoying the magic of compound tax-free growth over time.

(c) Contributions can be withdrawn at any time for any purpose. On withdrawal, a withholding tax applies, e.g.

10% on withdrawals up to \$5,000; 20% on withdrawals from \$5,000 - \$14,999 and 30% on amounts over \$15,000. **Note:** Some of the few justifications for cashing in an unmatured RRSP include an extreme cash emergency or a sabbatical leave of absence during which an individual has little other taxable income. On the other hand, there may be other ways to get needed cash if, for example, you own your own home.

(d) Once withdrawn, contributions cannot be returned/replaced except under two specific uses: the Home Buyers Plan and the Lifelong Learning Plan. The original intent of Parliament was to encourage Canadians to save for retirement; hence the name and the incentives of an immediate tax deduction and subsequent tax-deferral. Since then, Parliament has eased the rules to allow first-time home buyers and students to make tax-free withdrawals from their RRSP savings. Specific rules apply and the monies must be replaced according to a set schedule.

Q. What about "contribution room"?

A. "Contribution room" refers to the amount an individual may contribute to an RRSP in any one year. If not used in a particular year, "unused contribution room" can be carried forward indefinitely for future use. Your "Notice of Assessment" from CCRA will advise you of this each year. This feature is important for young people because it allows them to focus on other financial priorities in the present without reducing their ability to invest in an RRSP in the future.

Note: It is perfectly legal to "over-contribute" a lifetime maximum of up to \$2,000 to an RRSP. These contributions will grow tax deferred inside an RRSP, although you cannot claim the over-contribution as a tax deduction.

Example: Marie has just won \$2,000 at Bingo. She has decided to invest her windfall and is considering possible options:

- (a) She could apply it to her RRSP's "unused contribution room";
- (b) She could pay down her mortgage;
- (c) She could "over-contribute" to her RRSP;
- (d) She could purchase \$2000 of XYZ Canadian Equity Fund in a non-registered account.

Assuming her RRSP is **not** fully "topped up", her best option would be to apply the \$2,000 to her RRSP "unused contribution room". She gets an immediate tax deduction (creating a \$763.20 refund, assuming a 38% tax rate) which can be applied to pay down her mortgage, and the funds will start to grow tax free inside her RRSP earning compound growth - a "win-win" outcome!

Assuming her RRSP is fully "topped up", if she has no "unused contribution room", she has a choice between: (a) paying down the mortgage; (b) making an over contribution to her RRSP; and (c) the equity fund investment in a non-registered account. How does she choose?

Financial planners have different views on this question. The key question becomes which will provide the greater amount of wealth. Here are some general rules of thumb: a) pay the mortgage if you are uncomfortable owing money; b) contribute to the RRSP if you don't have a good pension plan; c) do both. Contribute to your RRSP **and** use the tax refund to pay down the mortgage (assuming you have available contribution room).

Since Marie has maximized her RRSP contributions in the past, she will have to consider other factors, e.g. comparing her mortgage rate with an unknown future rate of return on her investment (either inside or outside her RRSP), market conditions, etc. There are no tax deductions available in any case. Investment income earned inside an RRSP is tax deferred; outside in a non-registered account, investment income is fully taxed (although capital gains from earnings on equity funds are tax-advantaged). Marie feels her best choice, with no unused contribution room, would be to pay down her mortgage; her second choice would be to invest inside her RRSP; investing outside her RRSP would be her last option.

Q. Q. Why are Spousal RRSPs important?

A. A "Spousal RRSP" is one that is set up for the benefit of one's spouse, including common-law partner. **Example:** John has decided to direct his total RRSP contribution to his spouse Jane. By doing this, he can claim the tax deduction on his tax return - saving him taxes immediately; Jane builds up her RRSP account in her own name.

This is a perfect "income-splitting" strategy, especially in the case of a couple with a large disparity in their incomes/pensions. In effect, it spreads retirement income between both individuals, which can have the result of reducing taxes when the funds are withdrawn after retirement.

Note: In the case of a younger spouse, John can continue to make spousal RRSP contributions - up to his annual limit - until the end of the year when Jane, the younger spouse, reaches 69.

Q. When may I make contributions?

A. RRSP contributions may be made at any time of the year, up to the end of February, to claim the tax deduction. Some people apply their annual tax refunds against their current or (past) unused contribution room. Many people set up regular bi-weekly or monthly payments, sometimes by payroll deduction or automatic payment from their bank account. By doing this:

- (a) RRSP contributions become part of the monthly list of budgeted expense items;
- (b) You can plan to maximize this year's contribution;
- (c) You can gradually begin to use up past years' "unused contribution room" by additional deposits over time so that you will have "topped up" your RRSP before your retirement day;
- (d) RRSP contributions benefit from "dollar cost averaging";
- (e) Cash flow is managed better than by the annual rush to make contributions by the deadline on each year;
- (f) RRSP "catch up" loans will not be needed, as you will be "ahead of the game" by planning ahead and budgeting.

Note: RRSP contributions entitle you to a deduction on your tax return, but that claim may be put off and the deduction claimed in any future year. This makes sense if you are expecting to be in a higher tax bracket in the near future.

Q. What happens on death?

A. If the owner dies, the fair market value of the entire RRSP is included as income deemed to be received in the year of death. This could have significant tax implications for the estate in meeting the unfunded tax liability. Thoughtful estate planning can address this problem...often a life insurance policy is used as a means of "pre-funding" this certain debt, in effect paying the tax and preserving the estate for the beneficiaries.

Note: The Income Tax Act allows a rollover of your RRSP to your spouse or financially dependent infirm child or grandchild without being taxed; taxes only come into play on the death of the second spouse.

Q. How are RRSPs managed?

A. The trustees of the securities manage amounts invested in RRSPs on your behalf. Various securities (stocks, bonds, etc) may include in their purchase

price a sales charge or commission for the dealer who supplies the product. Once purchased, a management fee – in the case of mutual and segregated funds – is charged by the manager annually to unit holders.

Q. What securities should I put in my RRSP?

A. The answer to this question is different for each person. It depends on your "investor profile". How do you intend to use these funds? When will you need the money? What is your comfort level and tolerance for risk? What is your anticipated rate of return? (Aggressive or conservative investor.)

Once these questions are examined, an "investor profile" emerges. From this information, a mix of various securities can be suggested that will suit your unique needs. This asset allocation usually consists of a mix of three asset types – cash (for liquidity and capital preservation), bonds and preferred shares (for income), and equities-stocks or common shares (for capital growth). Wise investors choose a mixed collection or portfolio of all three asset types in a proportion of say 10% cash, 30% bonds and 60% equities. This allows diversification to further reduce the risk of putting all your eggs in one basket. A Financial Security Advisor would gladly assist you in this process.

Q. Are there any other issues?

A. (a) RRSPs **cannot** be used as collateral for a loan or line of credit. While RRSPs are a valued asset and certainly serve as an important element in your net worth, they are excluded from consideration by financial institutions when you borrow.

(b) RRSPs are **not** immune from creditors. If this is a concern, and it could be for business people and self-employed professionals in particular, there are ways to protect your retirement assets from the risk of bankruptcy. Insurance companies offer "segregated funds" which contain many of the features of mutual funds plus creditor protection plus guarantees to limit investment losses at maturity and on death.

(c) Are RRSP loans (to "catch up" on unused contribution room) a wise move?

Some say No! They argue it is preferable to simply set up a savings program to make regular monthly contributions going forward. Detractors maintain the extra investment income in the RRSP will not exceed the interest expense on the loan by much, if at all. Furthermore, the interest on an RRSP loan is **not** tax-deductible. Borrowing to invest is not for them.

Others say yes! Proponents argue that borrowing to contribute to an RRSP makes sense when your other choices are to make no contribution at all or to delay the contribution for a few years. Certainly taking out a loan will result in your contribution entering the RRSP sooner than by making periodic deposits. Tax free growth compounding over time tips the balance they maintain. In this scenario, applying your tax refund immediately to pay down the loan **and** adjusting your loan to a shorter term also makes sense.

On balance, under prevailing conditions with RRSP loans available at/near prime (currently 4.5%) and with recovering markets, RRSP loans are worth a consideration, but only after considering your own total financial picture with professional advice.

Pat Hogan is a retired principal/teacher and a life member of the NLTA. After completing his Securities, Insurance and national Certified Financial Planner (CFP) exams, he is now a qualified Financial Security Advisor with Facey Financial Planning & Consulting. Pat would welcome inquiries, with no obligation, at 754-0413 or email: hogan@roadrunner.nf.net



Kids' Take on Media

Canadian children's and adolescents' attitudes and behavior regarding media are wide-ranging, and yet most interact with media without the benefit of guidance from parents and teachers.

On the eve of National Child Day (November 20) and World Television Day (November 21), the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) released the results of *Kids' Take on Media*, a landmark national survey of 5,756 students in Grades 3 to 10.

"We chose the timing to highlight the significant influence that media has in the lives of children and adolescents, and our role as parents and educators in making the most of that connection," says Terry Price, CTF President.

The *Kids' Take on Media* study shows that children and adolescents whose parents supervise their TV viewing and who discuss violence, racism and sexism in the media, are more likely to be aware of the negative impact of media violence. Many children, however, are on their own.

Nearly half the students surveyed say they receive no parental guidance on which TV programs they can watch, and two-thirds report that no one says which video or computer games they can play, or for how long. These children are more likely to regard media violence as benign.

Young people themselves recognize the need for supervision. Their top-rated TV show – *The Simpsons* – is one they believe younger children should not be watching. They also recognize the power of interactivity in video games, saying there should be tighter age restrictions on mature-rated video and computer games than on R-rated films.

The ground-breaking research in *Kids' Take on Media* found that approximately 75 per cent of children and adolescents chose their favorite television programs because of two attributes: "exciting" and "funny", while the "violent" component was the least favored of all, ranking at the bottom of the list of 10 possible attributes presented to children in the survey. When asked why they disliked certain video games, "too boring" and "not enough action" were cited as the top two reasons.

"This sends a clear message to the industry that violence does not increase the popularity of a program", explains Price, "and that educational programming has to compete with the best in order to be successful with children."

Kids' Take on Media found that frequent news watchers feel more worried about the world but also more motivated to do something about it. Younger children are the ones most frightened by the news, feeling their personal safety is at risk. Girls are more likely to be sensitive to the harmful effects of media violence; 60 per cent of younger boys play video and computer games daily; and 75 per cent of kids in Grades 7 to 10 watch restricted movies at home. More than half the students surveyed in Grades 7 to 10 said they had witnessed real acts of violence that mimicked computer games, videos or television shows.

"Clearly, parents and teachers have a crucial role to play in helping young people sort through the wealth of media in our society," adds Price, noting that an astounding 48 per cent of Canadian kids aged 8-15 have their own TV and 35 per cent have their own VCR.

"Although media education is mandated in all provinces and territories, there is little professional learning development for teachers attached to this new discipline," says Price. She also notes "there are many excellent resources currently available to parents and teachers, to help young people to think critically about what they are watching or interacting with on TV and computer screens. Our survey shows that the older children get, the more they themselves see the value of studying media in school."

Based on the *Kids' Take on Media* survey results, CTF has produced a resource list and a special *Bulletin for Parents* with tips and information to nurture media literacy at home, which are available on its web site. In addition, CTF is currently preparing a teacher/student Activity Guide based on the *Kids' Take on Media* survey. The guide will be available on the CTF web site early in 2004.

The survey was designed and conducted by Erin Research, in collaboration with CTF and the Media Awareness Network (MNet). It was made possible by a Government of Canada grant through the Department of Justice's National Crime Prevention Centre.

More than 120 schools took part, representing rural and urban communities, Francophones inside and outside Quebec, and Anglophones in every province and territory in Canada. The response rate was an exceptional 93 per cent. The margin of error for a survey of this size is plus or minus 1.3 per cent 19 times out of 20.

**Students...
Does your
Teacher
Make the
Grade?**

The Newfoundland

HERALD

Education Week: March 7-13, 2004 Learning: A Class Act

Honour thy Teacher AT A LEAFS GAME

HELP LAUNCH EDUCATION WEEK 2004

Students are invited to write us a letter stating why a teacher you know should be honoured at our Leafs Home Game Saturday March 6th when the St. John's Maple Leafs face off against the Toronto Roadrunners.

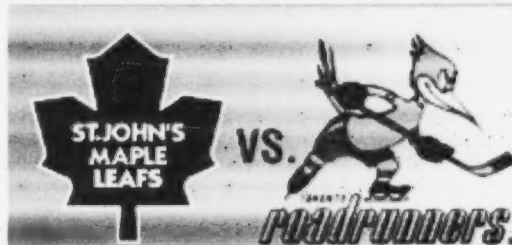
All submissions should be made on or before February 10th, 2004

Submit your letter one of the following ways:

Mail: The Newfoundland Herald,
P.O. Box 2015, St. John's NL A1C 5K7
Email: syoung@nfdherald.com
Fax: 726-6971

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RESOURCES

E-STAT

E-STAT is a comprehensive educational resource designed by Statistics Canada and made available exclusively to Canadian Educational Institutions free at www.statcan.ca. This exciting research tool provides quick access to data from: our popular socio-economic database called CANSIM, which contains thousands of statistical tables on Canadian society and the economy; Census of Population (2001, 1996, 1991, 1986, 1665-1871) – students can explore data on specific neighbourhoods, cities, town and villages; Census of Agriculture; Environmental statistics; and data from Elections Canada (1997 and 2000 Federal elections).

E-STAT lets you bring columns of data to life in the form of graphs and maps which immediately reveal trends. It is suitable for a wide variety of curriculum applications and students will have fun learning. Subject areas include Family Studies, History, Geography, Economics, Mathematics, Social Studies and more. Participants in the *How to Use E-STAT* workshop will learn how the large data holdings in E-STAT are organized, how to research a specific subject, how to create tables and graphs, how to export data files and how to create maps.

ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

The Essential Guide to Global Citizenship explores issues of global interdependence, encouraging students and teachers to engage in the various aspects of global citizenry to become informed and involved global citizens.

An innovative concept, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Canadian Autoworkers Union (CAW), *The Essential Guide to Global Citizenship* combines a mixture of web-based and print curriculum guides aimed at Grades 10-12. The web site takes you on a journey through many of the prevailing global issues of today.

Teachers are encouraged to access the web-based resource as a complimentary learning tool for use alongside the print cur-

riculum guides – the *Global Learner Series*, teaching units that focus on the following themes: Peace and Conflict, Consumerism and Media Literacy, The Coffee Trade, Global Warming, and Music and Society.

The Essential Guide to Global Citizenship Global Learner Series is designed to be used together but will also function as stand-alone units. They are great teacher and student friendly resources aimed to stimulate thought and invoke inspired learning. The units can be purchased individually for \$8.50 or together as a series for \$25 and are available online from Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA) at www.vidae.ca. The Essential Guide to Global Citizenship web site that complements the series can be accessed at www.vidae.ca/global.

YOUTH JUSTICE MULTIMEDIA INFORMATION PROGRAM

Department of Justice Canada has created a Youth Justice Multimedia Information Program for youth and the professionals who work with them. A sample of this program was originally distributed in April 2003.

The program, which includes two CD-ROMs and a facilitator's guide, is designed to raise awareness about the new *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, the consequences for youth who commit crimes, and the contribution made by professionals involved in the various stages of the Canadian youth justice system.

The program invites users to learn about the youth justice system through animated scenarios involving young people in conflict with the law. It also contains a library which provides simple and rapid access to key information on the renewal of the youth justice system, the new Act, and the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention.

To receive a copy of the program e-mail youth.jeunes@justice.gc.ca.

To learn more about the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the broader Youth Justice Renewal Initiative, please visit the Department of Justice Canada web site at <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/youth>.

CTF RESOURCES

Virtual Education, Real Educators – This publication is intended to assist teachers to critically examine the implications of online education in the context of their own classrooms and profession. In addition to providing an overview of the issues, it offers guidelines to inform policy development, classroom practice, collective bargaining and general thinking about technology implementation in our schools. Cost: \$10.

Seeing the Rainbow – This new and engaging document presents to Canadian educators some of the social and political contexts in which bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender and two-spirited issues in education have been, are being, and need to be addressed. Cost: \$15.

DEBOUT!, a national cultural activities handbook, is an invitation to celebrate the diversity and richness of French-language minority communities in Canada. Its 200 pages are brimming with resources and activities marking specific dates throughout the school year, such as Francophonie Flag Day, Francophonie Week, Volunteer Week, Earth Day and Heritage Day. Cost: \$10.

Standardized Testing: Undermining Equity in Education argues that there is little evidence to support standardized testing from a pedagogical perspective. It examines the effects of standardized testing on educational equity with particular emphasis on the impact of testing bias and the misuse of test results. It also discusses performance-based assessment, addresses the politics of testing, offers some general observations on the assessment of student learning, and provides principles developed by educators to guide decision making in the areas of assessment, evaluation and curriculum. Cost: \$10.

To order copies of any of these CTF resources, contact the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2490 Don Reid Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1H 1E1, Tel: 613-232-1505, Fax: 613-232-1886, www.ctf-fce.ca. All resources subject to \$3.50 postage and handling and applicable taxes.

NEW, FREE TEACHING RESOURCES TO PREVENT TOBACCO USE

Despite recent progress, smoking and tobacco use remains as a huge problem threatening the health of young Canadians.

The *Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey* (Health Canada, 2002) reports that 18% of 15-17 year olds smoke. Over 178,360 youth (14%) of these young people smoke over 12 cigarettes a day.

Research shows that a well-developed and well-implemented school anti tobacco program can reduce tobacco use among youth.

A Canadian study calculated that every dollar invested in classroom anti-smoking programs saves almost 15 dollars in health care and other costs.

Research has also told us what works in school-based tobacco teaching and prevention.

The Canadian Association for School Health (CASH) has prepared some web-based summaries that describe:

- evidence based curriculum design and supports for teaching;
- best teaching practices;
- how schools and other agencies in the community can cooperate to reduce tobacco use.

CASH has also prepared a collection of lesson plans and several student webquests. Find the summaries and teaching resources at www.safehealthyschools.org/tobacco.htm.

There are several excellent teaching and learning resources available from Health Canada and provincial/territorial governments. Health Canada's web site has:

- the latest research and statistics;
- an Internet Youth Contest;
- smoking cessation resources ;
- interactive pages for youth;
- resources for professionals working to reduce tobacco use.

To access these federal resources, go to the web page shown at the bottom of the ad on this page.

VIRTUAL TEACHER CENTRE™



You are invited to visit and register with the Virtual Teacher Centre at www.virtualteachercentre.ca. The VTC is an exciting initiative designed to support educators in their professional lives. When you register with the VTC, you choose your own password, get access to a private portfolio, internal messaging and a personal planner. Membership also gives you access to professional literature, curriculum support materials, links to education resources from around the world and an opportunity to participate in our own professional learning community. Visit the site for more details.

The VTC has entered into a partnership with the Centre for Distance Learning (CDLI) to deliver all online PD for the CDLI and the Department of Education. Memorial University, as a partner, is providing space for the VTC on the third floor of the Education Building. The VTC has a number of partnerships ongoing with several school districts. **Membership is free!** Become a part of Canada's first online professional development community sponsored by the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. Many of your colleagues have already registered!

Calendar

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CONFERENCE

March 5-6, 2004

Health Sciences Centre, St. John's. A mini-conference for educators, students, parents and professionals. Speakers include Dr. Robert Weaver III, Ph.D. (*Living with Dyslexia and Attention Problems*); Maureen Riley (*Untapped Potential of People with Learning Disabilities*); Dr. Kim St. John (*Myths and Facts of ADHD*). Full two-day workshops - \$80 non-member (includes membership), \$50 members. Individual workshops - \$25 each non-member (membership not included), \$20 each for members. Registration is limited. Contact: LDANL, Tel: 709-753-1445; Fax: 709-753-4747; www.nald.ca/ldanl.

THE ABCS OF PRESCHOOL LITERACY DEVELOPMENT - USING STORYBOOKS TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND LISTENING

March 27, 2004

Health Sciences Centre Auditorium, St. John's - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Open to professionals, parents and the general public. Cost: \$10 per person. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. prior to the workshop. For further details please call Speech-Language Pathologist, Chris Murphy at 709-777-8109.

PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY SIC CONFERENCE

April 29-30, 2004

Hotel Marystown and Sacred Heart Elementary, Marystown. Call for Presenters - If you have a topic you would like to share or know of someone with skills/information that would be of interest to primary and elementary teachers, contact Theresa Jarvis at tjarvis@bpsb.nf.ca. For further information contact Clyde Jackman, Tel: 709-279-2870, Fax: 709-279-2177 or e-mail: cjackman@bpsb.nf.ca.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCE

May 19-21, 2004

Battery Hotel, St. John's. Contact Linda Pike, Tel: 709-754-2440/41, Fax: 709-754-1805; E-mail: linda@ves.k12.nf.ca.

CANADIAN DOWN SYNDROME SOCIETY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

May 20-22, 2004

St. John's. A great opportunity for educators to learn about Down Syndrome. There will be some world renown speakers addressing education topics to help teachers as they endeavor to help individuals with Down Syndrome reach their potential. For further information contact Jamie Eddison, jdeddison@nf.sympatico.ca, Tel: 709-778-1258 (day) or 709-745-4492 (evening).

NON-VERBAL LEARNING DISABILITIES WORKSHOP

October 8, 2004

Mount Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor. Dr. Dean Mooney (co-author of a new book on NLD with Dr. Byron Rourke), will be presenting this full day workshop. For further information contact Keith Adey, Tel: 709-292-5727.

MUSIC SPECIAL INTEREST COUNCIL CONFERENCE

October 21-23, 2004

Holiday Inn, St. John's. Contact Mary Dinn, President and Conference Chair, Tel: 709-745-1253 or e-mail: mdinn@roadrunner.nf.net.

S.M.A.R.T. (SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ACCESSING RECENT TECHNOLOGY) T3 REGIONAL CONFERENCE

October 22-23, 2004

Fairmont Hotel, St. John's. Join K-12 and college mathematics and science colleagues for two days of innovative professional development using Texas instruments and other educational technologies. Deadline for applications for presenters is March 31. Registration Fees: \$65 (Early Bird); \$75 (after June 15, 2004). For further details including online registration, contact the conference web site at www.stemnet.nf.ca/smart/.

Dates to Remember

March 2004

- Mar 7-13 Education Week
- Mar 18 **Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications
- Mar 31 **Board Deadline:** Notice for retirement at end of school year
- Mar 31 **Deadline for Applications** (on or before March 31): Centennial Study Award; International Conference Presenters Program

April 2004

- Apr 1 **Deadline:** Johnson Bursary Applications
- Apr 15 **Deadline:** Notice of postponement of Deferred Salary Leave or withdrawal from DSLP
- Apr 16-17 NLTA Executive Meeting
- Apr 30 **Deadline:** Deferred Salary Leave Applications
- Apr 30 **Deadline:** Year-end resignation from contract

May 2004

- May 7 **Deadline:** Notification by Board of layoff
- May 9-15 Branch Election Week
- May 20 **Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications

June 2004

- June 11-12 NLTA Executive Meeting
- June 15 **Deadline:** Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests

July 2004

- July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications

